

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION

Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 1, line 5, with the following:

This application is a 35 U.S.C. 371 U.S. national phase application of PCT International Application PCT/US00/15410, filed June 1, 2000, which claims priority to provisional application Serial No. 60/137,060, filed June 1, 1999 and to a second provisional application Serial No. 60/176,993, filed January 19, 2000.

Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 33, line 14 with the following paragraph:

In a specific embodiment, the present invention also provides a method of treating an animal in need of treatment for a deficiency in cerebellar granule neurons, a hearing impairment, an imbalance disorder, a joint disease, or in need of promoting mechanoreceptive cell growth, or a disease that is a result of loss of functional *atonal*-associated nucleic acid or amino acid sequences. This method comprises delivering a transcription factor having an amino acid with at least about 70% identity, preferably at least about 80% identity, and more preferably at least about 90% identity to the sequence AANARERRRMHGLNHAFDQLR (SEQ ID NO:70) to a cell in the animal. In some embodiments, the cell in the animal is located in the inner ear of the animal. Preferably, the transcription factor competes with *atonal* for binding to Daughterless protein (Jarman et al., 1993) or competes for binding with Math-1 to E47 protein (Akazawa et al., 1995).

Please replace the first full paragraph on page 51 (lines 13-20) with the following paragraph:

It will also be understood that this invention is not limited to the particular nucleic acid or amino acid sequences of SEQ ID NO:2 through SEQ ID NO:66, of which sequences are amino acids. Recombinant vectors and isolated nucleic acid segments can therefore variously include these coding regions themselves, coding regions bearing selected

alterations or modifications in the basic coding region, and they can encode larger polypeptides or peptides that nevertheless include such coding regions or can encode biologically functional equivalent proteins, polypeptide or peptides that have variant amino acids sequences.